

106. (New) The molecular beacon probe of claim 104, wherein the probe detects a mutant nucleic acid better than a wild-type nucleic acid.

107. (New) A molecular beacon probe comprising:

an oligonucleotide comprising a stem and a loop structure and having a photoluminescent dye at one of the 5' or 3' ends and a quenching agent at the opposite 5' or 3' end, wherein the loop consists of 14-26 bases and has a  $T_m$  of 54-56°C, and wherein the stem consists of 4-6 base pairs comprising a sequence 5'-CACG-3'.

108. (New) A pair of molecular beacon probes comprising:

a first oligonucleotide comprising a first stem and a first loop structure and having a photoluminescent dye at one of the 5' or 3' ends and a quenching agent at the opposite 5' or 3' end, wherein the first loop consists of 14-26 bases and has a  $T_m$  of 50-51°C, and wherein the first stem consists of 4 base pairs having a sequence 5'-CACG-3'; and

a second oligonucleotide comprising a second stem and a second loop structure and having a photoluminescent dye at one of the 5' or 3' ends and a quenching agent at the opposite 5' or 3' end, wherein the second loop consists of 14-26 bases and has a  $T_m$  of 54-56°C, and wherein the second stem consists of 4-6 base pairs comprising a sequence 5'-CACG-3'.

#### REMARKS

Claim 104 is drawn to a molecular beacon probe. The molecular beacon probe comprises an oligonucleotide comprising a stem and a loop structure. It also has a photoluminescent dye at one of the 5' or 3' ends and a quenching agent at the opposite 5' or 3' end. The loop consists of